



1954

Shilpanjali

True beauty after all consists in purity of heart. Art to be art must soothe.
I want art and literature that can speak to the millions.

GANDHIJI.

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A Retrospect: 1953-54

A Year of Progress

A steady endeavour towards improvement in the standard of training was the key-note of the activities of the Department of Applied Art of the Sir J. J. School of Art, Bombay, in the year under review. Judging from the success achieved in this direction, the year 1953-54 can be viewed with satisfaction. Eighteen years after its establishment, the Department of Applied Art has reached a point which marks the beginning of a new phase—a phase of consolidation. We have nearly 400 students of whom 72 are women students. We have well-defined courses of studies adapted to the varying aptitudes and needs of our students. It was during this year that the Certificate Courses in the Morning School and the Apprentice Training Courses in the Evening School were introduced in the Department. Among the most heartening events of the year were the visits of Shri Dinkarrao Desai, the Minister for Education, Shrimati Indumati Seth, the Deputy Minister for Education, Dr. D. G. Vyas, Chairman of the Government Higher Art Examinations Committee, Shri A. L. Dias, I.C.S., Secretary, Education Department, Government of Bombay, Dr. K. B. Bharucha, the Chairman, and Shri M. S. Patil, Prof. R. N. Welingkar and Shri R. B. Ghorpade, Members, Bombay Public Service Commission, all of whom evinced a keen interest in the Department and

had a word of encouragement and appreciation for its work. We have before us the prospect of a new building and of extension and improvement of other facilities, which augur well for the future.

The Courses of Studies

The Department of Applied Art has now three different courses of studies, namely, the Certificate Course in the Morning School, the Diploma Course in the Day School and the Apprentice Training Courses in the Evening School. This Department is perhaps the only institution of its kind where an attempt is made to train designers who can adapt themselves to technical limitations and technicians who will have an appreciation of design. Thus a student at the Department while studying design is also offered facilities for training in allied technical subjects like Block-making, Photography, Lithography, Printing, Book-binding, Packaging etc., with a view to giving him a more through knowledge of his subject in all its stages from drawing to reproduction.

Morning School

Prior to the introduction of the Day School in the year 1952-53, students attending the Morning School were eligible to appear for the Government



Shri K. K. Menon

Sketching—A Constructive Hobby

By K. K. Menon, Elementary Class, (Morning School)

It is human nature that something invariably prevents one from one's working wholeheartedly and interestedly if one has a feeling of compulsion in the performance of his duties. How many of us are cursing our watches in not moving fast when we are in the classes! Indeed many of us do not wait for the watch, for they start packing up sufficiently ahead to see that their quitting the classes and sounding of the bell are synchronised. How often again we curse the time for running swiftly when we play outside or when we indulge in such things that are out of drab routine? Why this difference? Does it mean that all the students who curse the time while working in classes are not interested in it? Certainly not! Our conscience is aware that we are bound by duty to do something during class-hours, and paradoxically enough, this awareness itself is tickling us unconsciously to stop working.

Let us see how best we can adjust ourselves in a constructive manner and pursue a via-media that would combine both recreation and knowledge.

Hobby of an individual, as we know, is something that he or she likes most. When we indulge into our hobby we feel refreshed and entertained even if what we do as our hobby happens to be tougher than our normal duty. That is because we are free from the 'awareness' of any compulsion and we derive pleasure from doing something after our own liking.

Out of all the hobbies I find sketching to be the most convenient, economical and educative subject that could be adopted as a hobby for art students. Although hobby is a personal choice—and many of us might have some other hobby—there is every possibility for us, as art students, to find it easy to adopt sketching at least as an additional hobby, and derive some pleasure in it. Let us always have a sketch-book and a pencil. Let us try to put in it whatever we see around

us. When once you get accustomed to it you are sure to find some interest also.

Sketching improves the command of our lines; it unconsciously improves our ability in composition; it helps to achieve preciseness in the drawing of figures, forms etc. Remember, all these are achieved through recreation because we take it as a hobby. In addition to these we are sometimes encouraged as we get some appreciation from public when we do outdoor sketching. To add to our pleasure we come across with so many interesting incidents.

One day, when I was sketching in the Prince of Wales Museum, I saw an old woman walking alone and appreciating the exhibits. I thought if I could bring a figure in my sketch-book with her character, it would look quite interesting. At the same time I wanted to do it without her knowledge. Following her at a distance I started sketching. Unfortunately she noticed me looking at her every now and then, 'writing something', as she might have thought, and changing my 'look' whenever she looked at me. She might have thought that I had some sinister motive behind those actions, for she came charging and asked as to what I was doing. Slightly perplexed, I showed her my unfinished sketch and told that I was ONLY sketching her. Surprisingly, she changed her mood and patting me on my shoulder appreciated it although it was not worthy of appreciation. I narrowly escaped.

Such incidents as this one will add to our pleasure and will make sketching a pleasant past-time without parallel. I believe, therefore, cultivation of sketching as a hobby and not as an unpleasant duty will prove immensely useful for we art students in our pursuit of perfection because sketching then will not be a chore to be performed merely to please those who ask us to sketch, but it will be a pleasant recreation of our own choice.

